



**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 13, 2018

The Honorable Robert Wilkie  
Secretary of Veterans Affairs  
810 Vermont Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20420

Dear Secretary Wilkie:

We are writing to follow up on Former Secretary Shulkin's November 2017 announcement that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) would "further explore" adding additional ailments to the list of compensable conditions that the VA would presume to be caused by exposure to Agent Orange and other herbicides used during the Vietnam War, and thereby helping our veterans get access to the care they need. As you likely know, the VA had previously set a November 1, 2017 deadline for such a decision. We believe the administration should add bladder cancer, hypertension, hyperthyroidism and Parkinson-like conditions to its list of compensable conditions without further delay.

In March 2016, the National Academy of Medicine (NAM) presented its biennial congressionally-mandated update "Veterans and Agent Orange Update 2014." This report was written by a committee of medical experts that reviewed medical and scientific literature on select ailments and herbicide exposure published between October 1, 2012 and September 30, 2014, and its integration with NAM's previously established evidence database. Based on the entire body of evidence, the committee changed the categories of association with exposure to the herbicide spray in Vietnam for bladder cancer, hypertension, hyperthyroidism and Parkinson-like conditions, which were moved from "inadequate or insufficient" evidence of association up to "limited or suggestive" evidence of association.

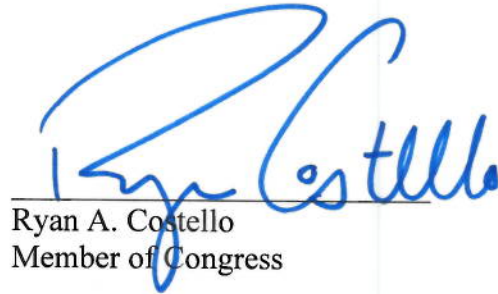
The decision to delay long-anticipated decisions on Agent Orange-related ailments deeply disappointed thousands of aging veterans, medical advocates, and veterans' advocates. Our veterans have served and sacrificed for our nation and the freedoms we all cherish. We each have a shared responsibility to do right by them – particularly our Department of Veterans Affairs. In March 2018, Former Secretary Shulkin testified before the Senate Veterans Affairs Committee that his favorable recommendations were sent to OMB and that the VA was processing data and financial estimates with OMB on adding additional ailments. We request that you expedite a favorable decision to expand the VA's list of compensable conditions caused by exposure to herbicides during the Vietnam War without delay, and strongly encourage you to include bladder cancer, hypertension, hyperthyroidism and Parkinson-like conditions in this expanded category.

Thank you for your consideration of this request and commitment to this issue. We look forward to your swift, comprehensive action to the benefit of our nation's veterans.

Sincerely,

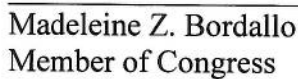


Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



Ryan A. Costello  
Member of Congress

CC: Mick Mulvaney, Director of the Office of Management and Budget



Madeleine Z. Bordallo  
Member of Congress



Charlie Crist  
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio  
Member of Congress



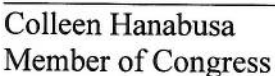
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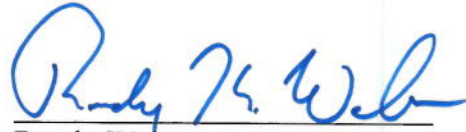
Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress





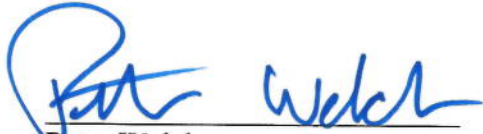
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Thomas R. Suozzi  
Member of Congress



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Randy Weber  
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Lee Zeldin  
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